The Three Pillars of a Republic:

AN ADDRESS BEFORE THE

PHILO AND FRANKLIN SOCIETIES

OF

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DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT, AUG. 6, 1862,

BY

Rev. J. R. W. SLOANE,

NEW YORK CITY.

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CANONSBURG, PA., Sept. 27, 1862.

REV. J. R. W. SLOANE:

DEAR SIR: Believing your address before the Franklin and Philo Literary Societies to be one specially suited for *the times*, and knowing that it will be read with general interest, we respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

E. S. RIGGS,
W. H. GILL,
J. C. WILSON,
} COMMITTEE OF FRANKLIN LITERARY SOCIETY.

T. A. SPROUL,
W. L. CHALFANT,
W. J. SNODGRASS,
} COMMITTEE OF PHILO LITERARY SOCIETY.

NEW YORK, Oct. 1, 1862.

GENTLEMEN: In reply to your note, I would say, that considering, as I do, the Address the property of your Societies, I cheerfully comply with your request. Please accept for yourselves and respective Societies my sincere thanks for the flattering manner in which the Address has been received.

Respectfully,

J. R. W. SLOANE.

E. S. RIGGS,
W. H. GILL,
J. C. WILSON,
} Committee of Franklin Lit. Soc.

T. A. SPROUL,
W. L. CHALFANT,
W. J. SNODGRASS,
} Committee of Philo Lit. Soc.

THE THREE PILLARS OF A REPUBLIC.

Fellow-Students of the Philo and Franklin Literary Societies:

My presence before you this evening will sufficiently express the gratification which your united invitation has afforded, my deep sense of the honor which your partiality has thus conferred upon me.

The occasion which has called us together is festive. I am aware that this hour is esteemed sacred to the Muses, and ordinarily devoted to the discussion of some theme related to those lofty pursuits in which you are here engaged, and which tranquilize the feelings while they expand the intellect and ennoble the soul.

I am compelled however to-night, by an imperative sense of duty, to turn aside from these inviting themes, and to speak upon subjects which possess, from the circumstances of the times, a deeper interest, and more vitally affect our welfare.

The aspect of affairs in our beloved country is that of a cloud rent and torn by conflicting storms, or of a ship driven of the wind and tossed; it is the crisis of a nation's fate; every moment is fraught with destiny: we mingle trembling with our mirth. Rebellion, widespread, atrocious, and sanguinary, rocks our Government from foundation to pinnacle, and with desperate frenzy

aims at the nation's life. The skies above are lurid with the fires of war ; the air is filled with the hurtling hail of battle; the earth trembles beneath the tread of armed hosts as they rush with impetuous speed to the scene of conflict, or mingle with fierce and fiery courage in the gory and tumultuous agony of the deadly struggle.

> "The midnight brings the signal sound of strife ;
> The morn, the marshaling in arms;
> The day, battle's magnificently stern array."

There is a skeleton with us at this banquet; a bloody hand dips with us in this dish. Even now while we speak, there goes up to heaven a wail like that which arose from the land of Egypt in that dreadful night in which "the Lord smote all the first-born, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne to the first-born of the captive in the dungeon:"—a very great mourning, like "the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon;" Rachel weeping for one hundred thousand of her children sacrificed to the bloody Moloch of war, and refusing to be comforted because they are not. Memory, stimulated and assisted by the hallowed associations of this time and place, evokes from the mists of the vanished years the familiar forms of beloved associates and instructors, some of whom remain until this present, but some have fallen asleep. From these, too, I must reluctantly turn aside to speak upon themes which, in this momentous epoch, press with peculiar urgency upon the attention of all thoughtful and earnest minds. I cannot, however, pass in silence the name of that illustrious man who presided with such distinguished ability over this institution while it was my privilege to be a student within its walls, and who, occupying a conspicuous place of influence, has faithfully, heroically, and successfully withstood, in family, in church, and in state, the tide of treason that for so

many months surged and swelled and roared like an angry sea around him. I refer, of course, to Rev. R. J. Breckinridge, D.D., LL.D.

> "As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm,
> Though round its base the rolling clouds are spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

The thoughts which I design to present, I shall arrange, after the manner of my profession, under three distinct heads, which I designate THE THREE PILLARS OF A REPUBLIC, viz.: RELIGION, LAW, and LIBERTY. I do not propose to discuss these topics in the abstract, nor with any pretensions to an exhaustive treatment, but with special reference to the condition of affairs in our country, and in view of the fact that I address ingenuous and ambitious young men, who must exert a powerful, perhaps a controlling influence upon her future destiny. These, young friends, are indeed eventful times. This is a great transition period—a grand historic epoch, like the period of the Reformation, the English, French, or American Revolutions. It depends upon the manner in which we conduct ourselves whether the sun of our country's glory shall burst through these clouds of war, ascend to its meridian splendor to shed beneficent light upon ages and generations to come, or sink, never to rise, amid storms of revolution into a rayless night of anarchy and blood. If God in his mercy will vouchsafe to us the wisdom to know the grand opportunity which he has now put in our power, this period will be the dawn of a brighter day of peace, prosperity, and happiness than has yet shed its holy light upon this or any other land—a period to which we may apply the words of the immortal Roman poet:

> "Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo."

We cannot come out of this war at the door at

which we went in. Revolutions never go back. As well suppose that you can cause the stars to return upon their courses, as to suppose that you can now restore the former condition of affairs—the "*status ante bellum.*" We are fighting to put down rebellion, but not, unless God has deprived us of reason—on the well-known principle of the heathen maxim, that the gods first madden whom they design to destroy—to bind ourselves anew to that body of death from which we now begin to be delivered. We shall have at the close of this struggle, if we conduct it aright, not "The Constitution as it Is, the Union as it Was," but all of the Constitution that is valuable and that guarantees liberty; Union in a much higher and nobler sense than that word has ever borne: the union not of light with darkness, not of Christ with Belial, not of Liberty with Slavery, but of Free States in one grand Empire extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the great Lakes to the Gulf: a country of which the patriot may be proud; one that he may love; one for which, if need be, he may lay down his life; one in which all men shall enjoy the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness without distinction of name, race, or color. The miserable men who unsuccessfully attempt to disguise their Secession sympathies with the cry, "The Constitution as it Is, the Union as it Was," only demonstrate how deeply they are sunk in the abyss of political corruption, how malignant and fierce is their hatred of liberty, how abject their love of oppression, and how little they know of that God who rules not alone in the army of heaven but among the inhabitants of earth. The old geological strata, rent and torn by the earthquake, melted by volcanic fires, and abraded by the floods, were reconstructed, without the loss of a single particle, by the great Architect into different forms, more useful and more beautiful, but never

restored to their original condition. So the divine Architect and Ruler of Nations takes care in these political revolutions that nothing valuable be lost, although he never restores communities thus convulsed to their original state. Of all calamities which could result from this infamous rebellion, restoration to the former condition of subserviency to the slave power is most to be deprecated.

"Take any shape but that,
And my firm nerves shall never tremble."

But let us be hopeful. Mythology relates that Venus was born of the foam of the sea, and that having been wafted by the west winds to the Isle of Cyprus, where grass and flowers sprang up in profusion beneath her feet, she was conducted to the assembly, and received into the number of the immortals. Thus may our country emerge from these troubled billows of war, to be crowned with a more radiant beauty, to dispense more abundant blessings, and to enter upon the path of enduring prosperity and power. War is God's husbandry for making nations more fruitful. After the winter come the spring and summer; after the storm, the bow and the sunshine. I am aware that in discussing the theme which I have selected, I am liable to come in conflict with certain political and ecclesiastical parties, consequently with the prejudices—perhaps with the honest convictions of those who are connected with them. As to this, I have only to say that I shall endeavor to speak as a Christian and a patriot, and that, while it is my sole object to present the truth according to my own conceptions of it, I shall as always endeavor to be true to my own convictions, and neither disguise my sentiments nor turn aside from the direct path for fear of offending any.

Has the time not come for bold and fearless speech? Have we not had enough, and more than enough, of that

treason to God and to truth which sought to mask itself under the specious name of Conservatism—I hate the word, and especially in the mouth of young men; for, as Beecher says, "God help the nation whose *young* men are conservative"—and to overwhelm all who should attempt to expose its hypocrisy by the use of those opprobrious epithets in which its infernal vocabulary abounds? The reign of terror is, however, fortunately passing away. He must be a weakling indeed who can now be frightened by the epithets, *fanatic*, *fool*, *madman*, etc., which have been so freely used in these past years, or be awed into silence by that word which seems to combine within itself the sevenfold terror of all the others—Abolitionist.

The American engineer who was employed to construct the great railway from St. Petersburg to Moscow, was directed to make out a diagram of the road, and lay it before the Emperor. In due time it was completed, and presented to his Majesty for inspection. "What is that?" said the haughty Autocrat, after looking at it curiously for some moments. "Please your Majesty," said the confounded engineer, "that is the road." "Road!" exclaimed Nicholas, "it looks more like a snake. What are all those curves for?" "Sire," replied the engineer, "those curves are to save the cities contiguous to the route." The Emperor, taking a pencil and placing it firmly at a point on the paper, says, "That, sir, is St. Petersburg," then drawing a straight line energetically to another point, "and that is Moscow; *make me that road.*" "But what," interposed the engineer, "will become of the cities?" "Do not know, sir; let the cities take care of themselves." It is time to inaugurate an era of free speech, and cease to pursue the old tortuous path for fear of affecting the interests of some church, society, or party which never

had any right to exist—which is even now nigh unto cursing, and fit for nothing but to be consumed by God's judgments. Let them take care of themselves. But let us see to it that we are faithful to truth and true to our own convictions of justice and righteousness. "The great dome of our Federal Capitol rests upon a circle of pillars. It is a beautiful symbol of our moral and material greatness, which must ever rest upon a circle of free institutions, each subsisting for some beneficent purpose, by its own inherent laws in entire harmony with, and lending additional strength to its neighbors." (Gilbert.) The first which I name, RELIGION, is first also in point of importance and necessity. This is a prime support of national greatness and perpetuity. No government, much less one that is wholly dependent upon the morals of the citizens, will long exist without it. By religion in this connection, I do not mean merely the religion of the individuals composing the State, but national religion acknowledged in the Constitution, embodied in the laws, and entering as an element into all those institutions which are the outgrowth and the exponents of the national life. Nor do I design to employ the term in its widest sense—its most general signification. I do not mean by it the Polytheism of ancient Greece and Rome, the worship of Boodh or Allah: I do not understand by religion the Mariolatry of Popery, the Materialistic Pantheism of ancient India and of modern Germany, the sentimental idealism of English Essayists and Reviewers, nor yet that specious and pretentious thing in our own country recently described as a "fantastical Paganism," arrogating to itself the name of religion, of which Slavery is the enthroned idol—which is known in the South by the intensity of its zeal in the cause of treason—in the North by a contemptible silence, a detestable neutrality, what John C. Calhoun

would call a masterly inactivity. As the ancient Jew prayed toward Jerusalem, and as the modern Frenchman is said to pray toward Paris, so the priests of this pro-slavery idolatry pray with their faces turned toward South Carolina, prove Slavery to be a divine institution from the Scriptures, and never allude to the present conflict for fear of sullying the purity of their robes with the mire of politics! Whenever you find a Northern minister who is silent in these times of national calamity, and who prays ambiguously, so that no mortal can tell whether his sympathies are with the North or with the South, you may be sure you have happened upon a rank Secessionist, and one as richly deserving the halter as the veriest traitor of the Confederacy. This spurious religion has done more than all other causes combined to debauch the public sentiment of the country on the great question which lies at the root of our present troubles. I fearlessly charge upon it the guilt of that blood which is pouring out like water, and hold it responsible for the suffering and anguish with which our distracted land is afflicted. By religion I mean the religion of the Bible—that religion of doctrine, of fact, and of worship revealed to us in the Scriptures, proclaimed to us by Christ and his Apostles, and by all the holy Prophets since the world began, which is alone able to make individual man wise unto salvation, and to preserve society from corruption and decay—a religion comprised in these two great commandments, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and the second is like unto it, *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" This is that religion which, in opposition to all skeptical systems from Celsus and Porphyry to Buckle and *The Westminster Review*, we affirm to be essential to the existence of society, and the main pillar of all permanent

government. This doctrine, I am aware, although I confess the consciousness of the fact does not give me great uneasiness, will not be accepted by godless politicians and time-serving ecclesiastics who take for their motto—the one as a shield for their shameless corruption, the other as an apology for their cowardly silence—that false maxim so trite in this country, "Religion has nothing to do with politics." This phrase, issuing like an unclean spirit from the mouth of French infidelity at the time of our national organization, although as great a falsehood as was ever uttered by the father of lies, has been accepted by us as the bright consummate flower of all political and religious philosophy, and has exerted an immense influence in the work of demoralization which has just culminated in this atrocious rebellion. Religion has everything to do with politics. Man can never break those cords which bind him, in all relations of life and under all circumstances, to the throne of God; nor find any sphere of action exempt from that dread review to which all men and all their actions will be subjected at the judgment of the great day. A nation is a moral person, has or ought to have a conscience, sustains relations to the immutable and eternal, is a plan of the divine mind, lies directly under the eye of God, and is accountable to him. There is for nations, as for individuals, an immutable morality. Any departure from this standard is as sure in the one case as in the other to incur the penalty of the divine judgments. This follows necessarily from the position which the state occupies, and the duties which it discharges. "*Diis immortalibus proximi sunt magistratus*"—it is supreme next to God, holds in its hand the power of life and death, transacts for man in many of his highest and most important interests. How absolutely insane, then, is that heresy which would seek the perpetuity of

the State in the absence of all religion—"the living among the dead." The existence of a nation depends, as all admit, upon its virtue—the prevalent state of morals; but there is neither virtue nor morals without religion. As well expect a soul without a body—a shadow without a substance. But give to a nation an imperishable faith, and you render it immortal. The patriot's prayer for his country, "*Esto perpetua*," is answered, and proof against all the ravages of decay; she must stand as long as time shall endure. Society is not a monster, ever producing and ever again devouring—not a whirlpool, ever throwing up nationalities from its dark abyss, merely to be again engulfed and destroyed. That theory which conceived some irresistable cycle in human affairs, compelling the rise and fall of empires as in the ancient world, is exploded and rejected by all devout and philosophical minds. Ancient and modern kingdoms have fallen, not because of any dark or fatal necessity compelling their destruction, but because they were built of wood, hay, and stubble—upon the shifting sands of expediency, and not upon the immutable rock of justice. They perished, not on account of religion, but for the want of it—the lack of a pure faith, which might have prevented decay, or arrested it when once begun. We refuse, then, the profane maxims current in the mouths of political speculatists—"Religion has nothing to do with politics," "The State has no God," "Law knows no Bible." Lamentably true, we admit, as a matter of fact, but false as the Koran as a declaration of principles. We prefer to say with Plutarch, "Religion is the bond of all society, and the pillar of all legislation"—with Montesquieu, "Religion is the support of society"—with Washington, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports"

—with the immortal Burke, "We know, and, what is better, we feel inwardly that religion is the basis of civil society and the source of all good and comfort"—with the scholarly Huntington, "Society is the sphere of the kingdom of Christ on earth." I am presenting no impracticable or imaginary theory. I am supported by an array of the greatest names—of orators, statesmen, jurists, theologians, and philosophers—from the times of Cicero until the present. But what reference has all this to the present crisis? Are we not a Christian nation? and are we not nevertheless in the furnace of war, heated in God's wrath seven times hotter than is wont? I answer, in sorrow, *No.* We are not in any true sense of that term a Christian nation. Be assured, friends, the curse does not come causeless. "Is there evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" These thunders of war are the voice of Him at whose awful rebuke the pillars of heaven tremble; reproving, from the high imperial throne of the universe, a sinful nation for its rejection of his name and authority. The tramp of these armed hosts is his avenging footsteps as he walketh to and fro, making inquisition for the blood that crieth to him from the ground. This battle of the warrior, that is with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, is the robe of vengeance with which Jehovah has arrayed himself, and come forth from his place to punish a guilty nation. "Who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?" No nation ever suffered such calamities, which was not guilty of stupendous crimes. We do not affirm that as a nation we are wholly destitute of the Christian element. There is much in our country which is the direct result of its influence. There are certainly here a large number devotedly attached to Christian principles. Our great benevolent and educational institutions are

largely molded and controlled by Christianity. Its powerful and permeating influence is everywhere felt. Nevertheless, as a government, we are not merely profoundly *laic*, as Guizot would say, but absolutely infidel and atheistic. Our Government is no more Christian than it is Jewish or Mohammedan. There is no recognition of God in its Constitution—no allusion to his name, authority, or law—not the most remote allusion to that great fundamental truth which, as the General Assembly in its late deliverance upon this subject truly declares, must underlie all our claims to be considered a Christian nation, viz., that there is one Mediator between God and man.* This judgment of war is not, we trust, for our destruction, but our reformation; that we may come out of the furnace ennobled and purified. But if we would avert heaven's righteous wrath in the present, and secure its favor for the future, we must have an acknowledgment of God in our Constitution; we must get the Bible into the statute-book; we must redeem holy time from secular purposes; we must have Christ acknowledged as Prince of the kings of the earth, assured that there is no future for nations so long as they rebel against him and trample upon his authority. I am not pleading for a religious establishment, much less am I advocating the claims of any sect; but I demand—in the name of God, I demand—that while attempting to put down the slaveholders' rebellion by force of arms, that as a means to this end we put down

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* For a full discussion of the infidel and atheistic character of our Constitution, I refer the reader to *Princeton Review*, Art. II., October, 1859; editorial in *The Independent*, Sept. 26, 1861; address by Rev. Stephen H. Tyng, D.D., published in *The Protestant Churchman*, Nov. 23, 30, 1861; sermon on the Bull Run disaster, preached in the North Church, Hartford, by Rev. Horace Bushnell, D.D.; sermon preached by Rev. Dr. Vinton in Trinity Church, New York, Friday, Jan. 4, 1861. I regret that want of space prevents me from laying before the reader extracts from these able discussions, in which the positions that I have here assumed upon this important topic are most ably presented, established, and illustrated.

our own rebellion against the Lord and his Anointed—that as a nation we "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and we perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little."

We have pursued material greatness during the whole period of our national existence. We have attained it, and it has burst like a bubble in our grasp. We have been feeding on ashes. We have planted the vine of Sodom; the grapes are gall and the clusters are bitter. We have sowed the wind, and now we reap the whirlwind. We have grown rich on the fruits of our oppressed brothers' unpaid toil: two millions a day are thrown into the bottomless abyss of war. This must go on until we have paid back, with interest, every dollar which we have made by the accursed traffic in human flesh.

We have been proud of our great improvements, scientific and mechanical. To-day Confederate soldiers are massed by means of the railroad. Jeff. Davis and Beauregard converse by telegraph. West Point graduates turn their murderous swords upon the country that educated them. *The Charleston Mercury* has been printed by one of Hoe's patent presses, so also is the not less treasonable sheet *The N. Y. Herald*—and *The N. Y. Observer* for aught I know. Is it not time that we begin to look to moral and spiritual improvement and advancement, as having an important bearing upon national existence and glory? This, however, we shall be told by some miserable huckstering political hack—who is ready at any moment to sell truth and betray liberty and ruin his country for the thirty pieces of silver which a brief tenure of some petty office would secure—is visionary and impracticable. We are told with a sneer that the millennium has not come yet, and that it is too soon to begin to shape our policy with reference

to that particular state of society; that we must be *practical*, take things as they are, and men as we find them. Let it be observed, however, that all the corruption that infests, all the misery that afflicts society, are the legitimate offspring of that course of policy which these excessively wise and eminently *practical* men pursue; that all advancement which nations make in the higher civilization is secured in the very face of their most determined opposition; that every great and good enterprise is carried forward in the very face of their malignity and hostility. James Buchanan was one of these *practical* statesmen. He succeeded in ruining his country, and bringing himself into that condition to which we may apply the words of Mrs. Browning—

"Not dead, only damned."

Be assured, young gentlemen, there is an imperishable crown to be won by some statesman of the future, in the path which I have here indicated. Study profoundly, you who aspire to the highest dignities and honors of the state, all the social, political, and religious elements of your age and country. Be not day-dreamers—be not founders of Utopias, but ever keep before your minds the idea of a great Christian State. So far from being impracticable, this alone is possible, for this alone exists in the decree and promise of God. He who lays the foundation, as well as they who erect the structure, will be enshrined in the grateful remembrance of mankind, and take his place high up among the number of the immortals who cannot die.

The greatest, wisest, and best who have investigated and written upon the science of government, declare that we have not yet reached the solid rock; that all that has been done thus far is mere experiment. So must it continue to be, no matter amid what disappointment of

hopes and wreck of nations, until we build our institutions upon those principles that are eternal as God himself, immutable as the pillars of the everlasting throne.

The second great pillar of a Republic is Order established by LAW.

Of Law, we must say with the sublime Hooker, "Its seat is the bosom of God; its voice is the harmony of the world." Plato places man's knowledge of law side by side with his recognition of Deity, as one of the prime evidences of his superiority to the irrational creatures. Other creatures are governed by instinct; man alone is the intelligent subject of regular and systematic law. True, in a very important sense, all things are subject to law; the world is *uni*verse, not *di*verse; Cosmos not Chaos. The majestic form of law is seen in every department of God's vast empire—causing, guiding, and controlling. "In the uniform plane," says Humboldt, "bounded by a distant horizon, where the lowly heather, the cistus, and waving grass deck the soil; on the ocean shore, where the waves softly rippling over the beach leave a tract green with the weeds of the sea; everywhere, the mind is penetrated by the same sense of the vastness and grandeur of nature, revealing to the soul, by a mysterious inspiration, the existence of *laws* that regulate the forces of the universe." "God," says McCosh, "acts everywhere in nature by natural agency according to natural laws." As science advances, new realms are added to the dominion of law—as Rebel States are subdued one after another and restored to the Union by the advance of the Federal armies—until now the whole domain of nature is seen to be subject to its sway; or if there still be any department in which its operation cannot be traced, this is not because, as Plato conjectured, matter is not always susceptible of receiving the impression of the divine

idea, but because of the imperfection of our powers or the present state of our knowledge.

I do not now, however, employ the term in this general, but in that more specific sense in which law has been defined to be a "rule prescribed by the supreme power of a state to its subjects for regulating their actions —particularly their social actions." I speak of that law whose prerogative is well defined in the lines of Sir William Jones—

> "Sovereign law, the state's collected will,
> O'er thrones and globes elate,
> Sits empress, crowning good—repressing ill."

Other things being equal, that state is most secure, prosperous, and powerful which has the best code of laws, most sacredly respected and most wisely administered. Especially in a Republic is such a system and administration of law essential. In such a government, law is next to religion the prime safeguard and support. Without this all things are insecure. Life is full of anxiety—becomes wretched, squalid, and undesirable. The land relapses into a wilderness—society into barbarism. Remove the barriers which law opposes to their progress, and society is swept as by a flood with every form of vice and crime.

The present rebellion is an infamous revolt against all law, human and divine, and as such should be suppressed at whatever cost of blood and treasure. History records no such causeless, unnecessary, unprovoked conspiracy against lawful authority as that which has infected with destructive and delirious madness the Southern States of this Union. Men on whom no wrong has been inflicted, from whom no rights have been wrested, from whom no concession has been withdrawn, with whom every covenant has been but too faithfully kept, and who have enjoyed a monopoly of the most honor-

able and lucrative offices of the State, are arrayed in arms against the Government which has thus nurtured, cherished, and protected them, and which they had sworn in the most sacred and solemn manner to support and defend: desiring, not according to the hypocritical pretense of all the devil-possessed since the days of Christ, to be let alone, but the entire subversion of the Government—the annihilation of Republican institutions on this continent.

In its avowed purpose of nullifying the Declaration of Independence; founding a government on Slavery, as its corner-stone; dividing its subjects into two classes—the rulers and the ruled; consigning the one to complete, perpetual, and hopeless bondage—fit for nothing but to pamper the pride and minister to the lusts of the other,—this rebellion is the most gigantic conspiracy against the rights of man, and the authority of God, that the world has ever seen. Who has not exclaimed, in view of its success, in the slightly-altered words of the English poet—

> "Where is thine arm, O Vengeance! where thy rod,
> That smote the foes of Zion and of God?
> That crushed proud Ammon, when his iron car
> Was yoked in wrath and thundered from afar?
> Where is the storm that slumbered till the host
> Of blood-stained Pharaoh left that trembling coast,
> Then bade the deep in wild commotion flow,
> And heaved an ocean on their march below?"

We must beware, however, of that fatal mistake which supposes law to originate in the will of the people, and to derive its authority from the mere fact of its enactment by the supreme power of a country. Law has its foundation in God, and is authoritative only in so far as it is the expression of his will. That is not law which the State makes law, as that is not property which the State makes property. All human

enactments depend for their authority upon their conformity to the law of nature and the revealed will of God, by which that law is confirmed, illustrated, and completed. All that man can do is to discover and declare in form that law which God has given for the regulation of society. With the discharge of this duty, his functions as a lawgiver cease. He is not the source of power. There is but one Lawgiver: that is God. Human enactments which contravene his law are null and void. Cicero scouts as insane folly—considers it of all things the most absurd—to suppose that the rule of justice is to be taken from the constitutions of commonwealths, or that laws derive their authority either from the will of the people, the edicts of princes, or the decrees of judges. Burke exhausts his powers of argument in confuting, the thunders of his eloquence in denouncing, the wickedness of supposing that laws are valid merely because promulgated by some human tribunal. He declares that it is not in the power of any man, not in that of the whole race, to alter or repeal any of the laws which the Lawgiver of the Universe has given for the rule of our conduct; that no argument of prescriptive right, none of policy, or of preservation of a constitution, can for a moment be pleaded, either for their enactment, or their observance when once they have been enacted; that human laws may affect the mode of application, but have no power over the substance of original justice. All those laws, therefore, which create artificial distinctions among men—which oppress the few for the advantage of the many—which do not secure to all men the enjoyment of equal rights—are unauthorized by God, and, consequently, have no proper validity. Laws are for the poor, the weak, the defenseless. The rich and powerful can take care of themselves. They are for the cot-

tage—the palace can do without them; for the peasant rather than for the peer.

Just here we strike at one of our great national iniquities—one of those sins which are at this moment bringing down upon us the righteous judgments of heaven. The storm has long been gathering. Now that it has burst, it would be wise to remove the cause, and not, as Victor Hugo says, "blame the thunderbolt." There has existed in this country, and enforced by all the power of the Government, an infernal code, compared with which that of Draco was merciful—a code which places a class, now amounting to four millions, beneath the iron heel of the most atrocious tyranny that the world has ever seen; depriving them of every right that man holds dear, and compelling them to the endurance of every outrage from which human nature shrinks and recoils—a code which future ages will read with astonishment and with wonder at the barbarity of the age in which it was enacted and tolerated. These laws are not confined, unfortunately, to the Rebel States. To say nothing of the Border States, Northern States, infected by that frenzy which Slavery has infused into all the veins of the nation, retain, even now, in the very face of these terrific judgments, those infamous enactments, properly styled "black laws," upon their statute-books. One has repealed her Personal Liberty Bill. Another, outstripping her sisters in the race of infamy, has sanctioned, by vast majorities, constitutional clauses which forbid men, guilty of a skin not colored like their own, the privilege even of a home upon her soil. We still permit a Taney to defile the place of justice in the Supreme Court of the United States; leaving it in his power to fetter liberty by his infamous decisions, and insult God and outrage humanity by that infernal dictum, "Black men have no rights

that white men are bound to respect." The Fugitive Slave Law is still executed in the District of Columbia. But a short time since, a slave, escaping from his pursuer, ran up the steps of the Capitol, and clung with fettered hands to one of the pillars which support it, was there seized by the tormentor, dragged from that temple sacred to *Liberty*, and thrust back into the hell of bondage from which he was attempting to escape. It is absolutely little short of hypocrisy for us to complain of the barbarism of the South, while we continue to tolerate such enormities. It is the savage spirit of Slavery that violates the grave — that last sanctuary that even the heathen respect; that shoots captive soldiers for looking out of the windows of the foul dens in which they are imprisoned; that fires upon flags of truce, and upon scalded wretches striving to save the remnants of a miserable life from drowning; and it is the same spirit in kind, although not quite so malignant in degree, which prevents us from repealing at once this whole system of inhuman and brutal enactments, which robs and oppresses a race because the sun has looked upon them and they are black. How can we expect the avenging angel to sheathe that sword which is now extended over the land, while there is neither repentance nor reformation?

"Neque
Per nostrum patimur scelus
Iracunda Jovem ponere fulmina."

A band of traitors, carrying with them a few honest and not a few weak-minded men, as the fiery nucleus of the comet carries the tail, tell us that all this agitation of these subjects now is imprudent, dangerous, exasperates the South, and prevents the restoration of peace. There is one way of securing peace—only one. It is not the rosewater plan: it is to crush rebellion by the force of arms; but in order to accomplish this, we must

have the God of Battles upon our side. The only way in which we can secure Him as an ally is by forsaking the sins which have provoked His wrath. As well attempt conciliation with a volcano or a whirlwind as with this rebellion. "Leviathan is not thus tamed." No. Expect to bind the ocean with a chain, or lash its sullen waves into submission, but be not so mad as to suppose that you can subdue this rebellion in any other way than by the employment of all the means which God has put in our power. When we have aroused such a moral sentiment in the North as shall demand and compel freedom from all complicity with Slavery—the repeal of every enactment which is based upon a distinction of color—then, and, in my judgment, not till then, shall we successfully put down this terrible conspiracy. We are still, as a nation, in rebellion against the government of God, and we must abandon this wickedness ere we can expect success in our cause, however manifestly just and right. If we could sweep away this whole system of unrighteous law, I would have more confidence in that single act of justice as a means of crushing the rebellion, than in the most numerous and best-appointed army that we can call into the field. That nation that believes that there can be any obligatory law for such a crime as Slavery, and which continues to act on such a belief, is sunk in the depths of infidelity and atheism, and without speedy repentance is lost. The only right which Slavery possesses is the right of extinction; it should be considered a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth, and every man that meets it should possess the legal, as he possesses the natural and inherent right to kill it. Slavery has no rights which any man, white or black, is bound to respect.

The third great pillar of a Republic is Liberty.

The enjoyment of liberty is of course essential to the very idea of Republican Government. A government which does not secure the largest amount of personal freedom compatible with security and order to all under its supervision, is a Republic only in name, not in fact. The condition of things in our own country is peculiar and anomalous. The Free States are democratic Republics. In them free institutions spring up spontaneously and flourish vigorously; in them man's capacity for self-government has been proved upon a large scale, and found eminently practicable. The Slave States are aristocracies—the meanest, I grant, of all aristocracies—not an aristocracy of intellect, not one of blood, not one even of wealth, odious as that is, but an aristocracy in which the members take precedence in proportion to the number of human beings that they are able to buy, hold, sell, or breed. There free institutions are exotics; they are only introduced to languish for a time, and ultimately expire. In the Slave States nothing has been proved but the fact frequently before demonstrated—the essential tendency of Slavery to curse with blight and barrenness the soil on which its foul footsteps are planted, and to degrade and madden, brutalize and barbarize, the community which practices the unnatural enormity.

The British—meaning by that term not the liberal and enlightened few in the British Isles who have clearly understood this controversy from the first, and who, of course, are intelligently and heartily with the North, but meaning by it the great mass of their aristocratic, trading, and manufacturing classes, their influential press, at the head of which, in spite of all disclaimers, stands *The Times*, and their leading statesmen, such as Palmerston, Russell, and Brougham—are speaking of our present struggle as the trial of Democracy, and holding it

up as an example of the failure of Republican institutions. It is needless to say that such a view of the case is utterly false and absurd. That which we have attempted, and which this gigantic conflict proves a disastrous failure, is the union of Slave Aristocracies and Free Republics in one Federal compact. We see before our eyes a demonstration, written as with a sunbeam, of the utter incompatibility between Freedom and Slavery—the absolute impossibility of States partly free and partly slave cohering in one great empire under the same form of government. Of course, we would not attempt to convince these European aristocrats of their mistake. Any hope of opening eyes so blinded by self-interest, by pride, and by prejudice, would be wholly chimerical. We say of them, as David of Shimei, "Let them curse on." If, however, they expect to derive any additional support for their rotten tyrannies, or to see the experiment of self-government prove a failure, from the present convulsion, the sequel will prove how far they have miscalculated, how wide of the mark has been their judgment of the true issue. No, gentlemen, it is not Freedom but Slavery that is on trial. With shameless effrontery it has appealed to the ordeal of battle. The verdict GUILTY has been pronounced upon it. More than half a million men in arms stand ready, at that word of command which cannot with safety be longer delayed, to give its carcase to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. Disguise it as we may, this conflict is with Slavery. This and this alone is the "*fons et origo malorum*" to our distracted country. If we do not put Slavery down, Slavery will put us down. If we do not destroy it, it will destroy us. One or the other must go under. The blindness is most amazing which does not see this; the infatuation most unaccountable which does not recognize and accept the issue. It is no

use to fight with great or small until we have struck the monster to the heart whose horrible convolutions and lashings threaten the life of this great nation. So long as we leave Slavery intact, and persist in defending it, we are fighting rebellion with one hand tied. Slavery is its cause, its chief support, its inspiring madness. It feeds and clothes the rebel armies; it performs all the oppressive work in the camp and on the march; it fights also in the ranks; for the rebel soldier is not such a fool as to care whether he fights with white or black, provided he conquers; and it furnishes the only possible pretext for prolonging this inhuman strife.

The duty to which God calls the nation to-day is Immediate, Unconditional, and Universal Emancipation. To this He has long called us by the voice of His Word, and by the faithful men who have foreseen the present danger, and attempted by warning, entreaty, and remonstrance to avert the storm which has now burst in such appalling fury upon us; but more loudly now in these terrific judgments does He thunder in our ears, "Let my people go." If we disregard this command, all that we have yet suffered is but the beginning of sorrows, the first big drops that prelude the storm, the first shadows of that darker night that is yet before us. If we obey, this stupendous conspiracy will vanish like the mists of the morning before the light of the sun, dissolve, and like an unsubstantial pageant faded, "leave not a rack behind." A Decree of Emancipation, promulgated not merely as a war measure, but as an acknowledgment of the right of all men to Liberty, and as a declaration of national repentance for long complicity with the guilt of Slavery, would transfer the strength of the rebellion to our side, and, as we confidently believe, secure the favor of Him without whose smile in vain are all our navies, armies, and munitions

of war. Border State men—that ill-omened incubus that has rested like a nightmare during this conflict upon the Administration, and disturbed it with dreams of imaginary perils—declare that we must not emancipate and arm the slaves, because they would turn upon and massacre their masters! Wouldn't that be a calamity just now? Who does not shudder at the thought of a few thousand rebels being given up to the musket, sword, and gibbet? But they would kill the innocent and defenseless women and children! This is an assertion wholly unsupported—another one of that enormous system of lies on which Slavery rests, and by which it aims to preserve its hateful life. Colored soldiers would be like other soldiers—no better, no worse. But suppose emancipation would lead to insurrection—let this, which we by no means admit, be for the moment granted—then, I say, it is better, far better, that every man, woman, and child in every Rebel State should perish in one widespread, bloody, and indiscriminate slaughter; better that the land should become a Sahara—be as when God destroyed the Canaanites, or overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah—than that this rebellion should be successful. Infinitely more precious to me are the lives of Northern soldiers, the inalienable rights of man, and the interests of humanity, than the lives of Southern traitors. I confess it, my sympathies are not just now enlisted in imaginary evils that might befall the homes and families of guilty rebels, but in the actual woes, the sorrows and desolations of Northern homes, the suffering of the innocent women and children of the North, whose sons, husbands, fathers, and brothers are cold and low in death, cut off by the sword of the traitor and rebel. I have no words to express the loathing and scorn of my soul for the whining, canting, snivel-

ing hypocrisy that is so tender of those whose tender mercies we have proved, and found them to be cruel. The wan faces of the heroic men who return wounded and maimed from the field of battle — the groans of those who fall, pierced through and through with the dagger which Slavery has drawn—the tears that I see shed in the house, on the street, and along all the lines of travel, for some beloved one, who was, but is no more—the noble fellows, scarred and maimed until there is scarcely enough of body left to hold the proud and daring spirit,—these are the things that move my pity and touch my heart. My concern is, just now, how to save the innocent, the loyal, and the true. I confess myself somewhat indifferent as to the present fate of the rebel, the traitor, and the criminal. If they would not be crushed by the falling fabric, let them stand from under. If they would not be ground to powder, let them remove from the path upon which are rolling the wheels of a righteous Providence. But we must not emancipate and arm the slave, for that would be *unconstitutional !*

> " But, oh, for him my fancy culls
> The choicest flowers she bears,
> Who *constitutionally* pulls
> Your house about your ears."

From whom comes this cry of unconstitutionality? Who are they who are so profoundly exercised for the safety of the Constitution? The followers and lackeys of the men who have been plotting and planning the subversion of the Government for the past ten years. Chief among this band of Constitutional patriots we find the name of Clement Vallandigham, a disgrace to the mother who bore him, to this our honored " Alma Mater" that educated him, and, above all, to the noble State, a part of whose citizens he misrepresents in Congress.

We cannot delay to particularize these worthies, of whom Vallandigham is the head and Ben Wood the tail; suffice it to say, they have raised this cry of Constitution merely as a covering wherewithal to disguise their treason.

"Oh for a tongue to curse the slave,
Whose treason, like a deadly blight,
Comes o'er the councils of the brave,
To blast them in the hour of might."

I freely admit that there are unfortunate concessions to Slavery in the Constitution of the United States. The patriotic men who framed that able instrument made a fatal mistake in allowing Slavery a place in that document. They expected it to die; but they should have made sure of it by strangling it in its infancy and while they had the power. I also admit that in time of peace the power of abolishing Slavery belongs of right to the States; but in war all this is reversed. And now that the Slave States, as such, are in revolt and threatening the very life of the nation, it is constitutional to adopt any measure that safety demands, and especially, as John Quincy Adams long ago demonstrated, is it constitutional in such an emergency to abolish Slavery. To say that there is anything essential to the existence of the nation which yet we may not do, because unconstitutional, is an absurdity that no sane man can for a moment tolerate. Is it constitutional to save the life of the nation? Is not the nation more than the Constitution? Was not the Constitution made for the nation, and not the nation for the Constitution? The Constitution is nothing but a paper—a mere parchment—good for nothing except in so far as it answers the great end for which it was framed. The moment it fails to do this, we not only may, but should, cast it aside and make another. If it were true that the Con-

stitution stands in the way of the salvation of the nation, then at once I would cut the Gordian knot, tear the Constitution to tatters, and trample it under foot. What sort of a Constitution is that which binds the nation hand and foot while the hosts of treason and rebellion overrun and destroy it? This insane cry about the Constitution is a most foolish idolatry. It has worked abundant mischief already, and will accomplish still more if we do not open our eyes to see that it is preposterous folly. There are times in which law may be broken and in which it becomes a sacred duty to override constitutions. This is beautifully illustrated by Huntington in his admirable work, "The Divine Aspects of Human Society," by an incident in Italian history, copied from the lectures of Mr. Greenough, the eminent sculptor. It is so applicable at the present crisis, that it appears to have been framed for the express purpose of illustrating it.

"When the great obelisk, brought from Egypt, was erected by Fontana in the Square of St. Peter's in 1856, it was determined to make that gigantic undertaking an incarnation of the knowledge and resources of Rome. They arranged the tackle and spotted their hands for the delicate and perilous work. To make all safe and prevent the possibility of accident from some sudden cry or alarm, a Papal edict was proclaimed by Sixtus V., promising death to any man who should utter a loud word until the engineer gave the signal that all risk was past.

"As the majestic monolith moved up, the populace closed in, the Square was crowded with admiring eyes and beating hearts. Slowly that huge crystallization of Egyptian sweat—fit emblem of the toil-wrought column of a civilized state—rose on its basis—five degrees—ten—fifteen—twenty. Ah, there are signs of faltering.

No matter. No voice. Silence! It moves again—twenty-five, thirty, forty, forty-three. It stops. Now there is trouble. Lo! those hempen cables, that, like faithful servants, have obeyed the mathematician, have suddenly lugged out an order from God not to hold the base steady any longer upon those terms. The engineer, who knew the handwriting of that order, trembled. The obedient masons looked on each other, silent, and then watched the threatening, hanging mass of stone. The unspoken question was, Which way would it fall? Among the crowd, silence — silence everywhere; and the sun poured down upon the stillness and the despair. Suddenly, from out that breathless mass of men rang a cry, clear as an archangel's trump, '*Wet the ropes!*' The crowd turned to look. Tiptoe, on a post, in a jacket of homespun, his eyes full of prophetic fire, and his whole figure wild, and lost in his irresistible emotion, stood a workman of the people. His words flashed like the lightning, and struck. From the chief engineer to his lowest servant, that lawless cry had instant obedience. Water was dashed upon the cables. They bit fiercely into the granite. The windlasses were manned once more. The obelisk rose to its place, and took its stand for centuries."

Gentlemen, our country hangs in such a perilous position. Friends ask in fear, and foes in scorn, Which way will it fall? Command or no command, law or no law, Constitution or no Constitution, let us shout, *Wet the ropes!* FREE THE SLAVES! Then will our country be rescued from her perilous position; this foul blot will be erased from her escutcheon; she will ascend grandly to her place, and stand through the centuries, an object of respect and admiration to the world!